

TUCKERMAN

House

S. W. Corner I & 16th Streets, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

HABS No. DC-78

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington 25, D. C.

house 1600

1600 EYE STREET, N.W.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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This house was built about 1885 by Lucius Tuckerman, son of Rev. Dr. Joseph Tuckerman of Boston.

Retiring from active business in New York, where he had lived most of his life, Lucius Tuckerman moved to Washington for his last years. He selected this corner of Sixteenth and Eye Streets for his home. This site was part of the garden of the William W. Corcoran estate which, surrounded by a high brick wall, occupied most of the block. The Corcoran house, a fine old Georgian mansion, stood where the Chamber of Commerce is now. The only other houses in the block were those of John Hay and Henry Adams in H Street.

Opposite the Corcoran house was the home of Thomas F. Bayard, former Secretary of State and Ambassador; and diagonally opposite still stands the Decatur House. Across Eye Street, at 1601, was the home of Mr. Justice Horace Gray and his vivacious wife, "Lady Jane". On the north side of Eye Street was the splendid old Riggs mansion, and beyond that, replaced by the Army-Navy Club, was the Myer House. St. John's Church is just across Sixteenth Street.

In these congenial surroundings, Lucius Tuckerman planned and built his home. The architect was H. H. Richardson, who designed many of the best known Washington homes of that period, including the John Hay, and the Henry Adams, and the Nicholas Anderson homes.

Mr. Tuckerman was greatly interested in art. He was a Founder and the first Vice President of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. He filled 1600 Eye Street with fine paintings, some of which are now in the National Museum. The library in the southeast corner, designed especially for reference books, was his favorite room.

A full description of the house and its furnishings and of the life within its walls may be found in Bayard Tuckerman's "The Tuckerman Family", (Boston, 1914). A quote from this book, page 207; says:

*no, as dist. set was from blowers + Marshall
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"A feature of the drawing room was the white marble mantel. When the Washington house was being built it happened that No. 1 Broadway, New York, was about to be torn down. The latter house was a fine specimen of colonial architecture. There lived Captain Archibald Kennedy, who had charge of the stamps in 1765, and there General Washington visited when in New York after the Revolution. In the year 1836, this house was owned, I think, by Robert Ray; there my mother went to her first ball, and she was sufficiently familiar with the house afterwards to remember the drawing room mantel, a rarely beautiful one. When 1600 Eye Street was being built my mother heard that No. 1 Broadway was to be torn down; and my father purchased the mantel and had it set up in Washington. The small painting of Apollo and the Muses which now appears in the paneling above was inserted by my mother's direction

Many of the prominent people of that day were entertained in this house. Among them was President Theodore Roosevelt, who liked to drop in on his way to the White House after one of his celebrated walks.

Lucius Tuckerman died in 1890, and Mrs. Tuckerman in 1906. She had been Elizabeth Wolcott Gibbs, the grand daughter of Oliver Wolcott, who succeeded Alexander Hamilton as Secretary of the Treasury in President Washington's cabinet. The house was then acquired by Hon. Henry Kirke Porter of Pittsburgh, a Member of Congress, from whom it passed to his step daughter, Miss Hageman. She, in turn, transferred it to the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution.

The Motion Picture Association of America in December, 1945, purchased the house from the two Government institutions.

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ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Lucius Tuckerman House (Motion
Picture Association)
1600 I Street, NW
Washington
District of Columbia

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Addendum to

Tuckerman House
SW corner I and 16th Streets, NW
Washington, D.C.

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

LUCIUS TUCKERMAN HOUSE
(MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION)

HABS No. DC-78

Location: 1600 I Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Present Condition: Demolished, 1967

PART I. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Three stories on raised basement; four-bay front. Psuedo T-shape; truncated corners on main (north) facade, polygonal bay on east facade.
2. Walls: Common bond brick of deep red bricks with similar color sandstone details. Large rusticated stone blocks on north and east facades on lower portions of exterior walls.
3. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: Two balconies on south, one at third floor level and the other at second floor level, the second floor balcony being a simple iron rail extension while the third floor one is larger and recessed into a stone section and has an elaborate iron grill. A small cement open porch exists also on this side at the corner.
4. Chimneys: Three large chimneys of a basically rectangular form but with the brick work of the exterior forming scalloped facets numbering six on the long side and three on the other side. The chimney on the south facades continues on down the exterior wall to the ground while the remaining two rise directly from the roof ridges.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is on the north facade surrounded by heavily decorative carvings and floral design in bas-relief in the sandstone. A smaller service entrance exists to the west of the main door. A double leaf door opens on the south facade to the porch. All appear to be the original openings.
 - b. Windows: Windows are asymmetrically located on the facades but are generally one-over-one-light double-hung wooden sash windows. All are of ample size and appear to be the original openings. There are no shutters on the exterior.
6. Roof: Uneven low pitch gable roof of slate shingles. Tin gutters with a curious tin dentil motif below the gutter.

B. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: Similar floor plan on all three floors as well as cellar. Central hall plan with three main rooms radiating from the entrance hall. Three smaller rooms exist at the corners, with the smaller room at the west corner being a subdivision at an early date of a larger room. The main stair is located directly in front of the main entrance. A smaller stair corresponding with the smaller service door on the exterior exists to the west of the main stair. The second floor has 10 rooms radiating from the central hall and also contains three bathrooms. The third floor has a similar plan but with smaller rooms and only one bathroom.
2. Stairways: There are two stairs. The main stair is a two-run left hand staircase. It has an open well continuing for three floors and is open string with four balusters to a step. The balusters are turned and each one rises to a capital of geometric design. The posts have similar floral designs accentuating the tapering tops. The risers number 8 and 12 for the two sections leading to the second floor and 11 risers leading to the third floor. The risers are approximately $6\frac{1}{2}$ " while the treads are 12". The secondary stair has three runs and is a left-hand open string stair with three balusters to a tread. The risers measure 7" and the treads $10\frac{1}{2}$ ".
3. Flooring: Linoleum and carpet cover the floor in all places.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Wall paper in central halls of a modern style. Painted in all other rooms except first floor room which has original wooden paneling exposed.
5. Doorways and doors: Main first floor rooms have double sliding doors while other doors are single wooden ones. The double doors have recessed panels and carved floral motifs while single doors are merely paneled. All doors seem to be original openings except in the once larger room at the west corner which has been divided into two.
6. Decorative features and trim: The two large windows of the main living room have interior sliding shutters. There are gilded ornamental plaster mouldings on ceilings of first floor; most elaborate in main living room where egg and acanthus leaves form a rectangular border around the ceiling. Floral mouldings located in corners and center of border. Main room has arrows and floral arrangement in deep relief surrounding chandelier. Similar design enframes the fireplace and the two large windows in the main room.
7. Notable hardware: Brass door handles. Brass heating grates in a highly decorative floral design. Exterior iron railings on two balconies and window grill are of intricate floral and geometric design.

8. Lighting: Modern electricity-all fixtures had been removed at the time of the visit.
9. Heating: Originally coal furnace with automatic loader, at present gas heating. Fireplaces had been removed at time of visit.

C. Site:

Adjoining walled garden with three large magnolia trees, hydrangia, and other shrubs in random placement. A brick wall (with iron rail superimposed on it) covered with grape vines, surrounds the area on two sides, eventually meeting the garage.

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